



“NUTRITION CONNECTION” for February

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Go Fish for Good Heart Health!

February is not only the month dedicated to love, but also the month in which we celebrate our heart health. Our heart's health is strongly determined by our genes, but we have the ability to keep our ticker in its finest form by enjoying a dose of daily of exercise and eating heart healthy foods.

In terms of heart healthy foods, the government recently released the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, which specifically advise us to consume 10 oz. of seafood a week. The primary drive behind this recommendation is the knowledge that fish, fatty fish in particular, is one of the most powerful foods we can consume for the health of our hearts.

Research indicates that fish may guard against not only heart disease but also hypertension, cancer, arthritis, depression, and who knows what else! Most of you by now have heard of fats called “omega-3” which are responsible for fish's protective power. Omega-3's act to lower fat in our blood, decrease plaque in our arteries, and promote our heart's natural rhythm which combined, decrease our risk of heart disease and heart attacks.

Nutrition Overview

Fish is generally low in calories, saturated fat and cholesterol, making it a good overall substitute for poultry and meat. It's also a good source of protein. For example, one 3-ounce serving of baked cod — about the size and thickness of a checkbook — has 21 grams of protein, 1 gram of total fat and 100 calories. By comparison, a 3-ounce broiled T-bone steak with all the visible fat removed has 21 grams of protein, 14 grams of fat and 210 calories.

Fish Safety

While there has been some concern with seafood and fish containing methyl mercury from industrial pollution of the oceans, the most recent evidences shows the benefits of eating fish far outweigh any risks of consuming mercury. The big “5” or fish which contain higher amounts of mercury include: large predator fish like shark, swordfish, king mackerel, grouper, and tilefish. Methyl mercury is particularly harmful to the development of the brain and nervous system of an unborn child or a young child. For this reason, women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant, nursing mothers and young children can safely eat up to 12-ounces of fish a week but should avoid eating predator fish mentioned above as well as limit their tuna intake to one 6-ounce can per week.

Basic Cooking Tips

Fish is the original “fast food.” In general, the cooking time for fish is 10 minutes for every inch of thickness-whether you bake, poach, broil, or grill. If wrapped in aluminum foil or baked in a sauce, cook 15 minutes for every inch. For frozen, unthawed fish, double to cooking time to 20 minutes for very

inch. To test for doneness, slip the point of a sharp knife into the thickest part of the fish and pull aside. If flakes begin to separate, the fish should be done.

1. **BAKE** (good for lean fish, such as sole, cod, haddock, tilapia or flounder): Cook fish in a pre-heated oven at 400° F until just tender. When fish becomes opaque, it is ready to eat. Cook approximately 12 to 15 minutes.

“Italian Inspired Fish” is one of my favorite “go-to” quick fish dishes!

Serves 2

Ingredients:

Aluminum foil (2 sheets – enough to create a “pouch” to cook fish in)

Fish: Your favorite white fish (2)

White wine (1/2 cup)

Sliced shallots or onion (1/4 cup)

Marinated artichoke hearts, coarsely chopped (1/2 cup)

Grape tomatoes, halved (1/2 cup)

Capers, drained (4 Tbsp.) *(you can also use kalamata olives if you prefer)*

Lemon, thinly sliced (1/2 lemon)

Parsley, chopped (1/4 cup)

Olive oil (1 Tbsp.)

Salt & Pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rinse and pat fish dry; place each piece of fish *(if fish has skin, place skin side down)* in separate aluminum foil pouches. Sprinkle fish with salt & pepper and cover each piece of fish with lemon slices. Divide remaining ingredients and add them to both of your fish pouches (1/4 cup wine, ¼ cup artichokes, etc.). Place two pouches on a baking sheet with rims *(in case there is any leakage)*. Cook for 15-20 minutes until fish flakes. Place fish, vegetables, and wine broth over garlic mashed potatoes, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, or spaghetti squash for a simple dish that will wow your special valentine.

2. **POACH** (good for all types of fish): Simmer fish steaks and fillets in liquid (just barely enough to cover the top of the fish) in a covered skillet. Try poaching in broth, water, or juice. Cook approximately 10 minutes.
3. **BROIL/GRILL** (best for inch-thick fatty fish, like salmon, mahi-mahi, halibut, and tuna): Marinate fish or brush with a little olive oil before and during cooking to keep fish moist. Cook approximately 10 to 15 minutes.
4. **MICROWAVE** (good for most types of fish): Arrange fillets with the thicker parts pointing outward in a microwave-safe dish and cover. Cook approximately 3 minutes or until opaque.
5. **STIR-FRY WITH VEGETABLES**: Using a wok or skillet, coat the bottom and sides with canola oil. Add the fish and stir-fry, tossing gently to coat on all sides approximately 2 to 4 minutes until three-quarters cooked. Remove to a warm platter. Stir-fry the vegetables, return the fish to the pan and cook 1 to 2 minutes more.

For more information on how McDaniel Nutrition Therapy can personally assist you with improving your health, visit www.mcdanielnutrition.com or contact me @ mcdanielnutrition@gmail.com